Special Representatives so far. Based on the first five rounds of talks between the Special Representatives, which marked the end of the first phase of negotiations, both sides signed the "Agreement on Political Parameters and Guiding Principles for Settlement of India-China Boundary Question" on April 11, 2005 during the visit of the Chinese Premier to India. In the second phase of negotiations, of which the last round was held in China from Nune 25 to 27, 2006, the two Special Representatives are engaged in discussions on an agreed framework for a boundary settlement on the basis of the aforementioned Agreement. Such an agreed framework will provide the basis for the delineation and demarcation of the India-China boundary to be subsequently undertaken by civil and military officials and surveyors of the two sides. Both India and China have expressed the conviction that an early settlement of the boundary question will advance the basic interests of the two countries and should, therefore, be pursued as a strategic objective.

Shanghai Corporation

2140. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether India aims to join Shanghai Corporation;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken for the same as on date;

(c) if so, the details of Indian delegation participated in the fifth summit of Shanghai Corporation; and

(d) if so, the details and number of documents signed at the fifth summit in the area related to security, counter-terrorism and energy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) and (b) India has Observer status in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). The SCO has not formulated its procedures for accepting new members as yet. The Joint Communique issued on 15 June 2006 after the SCO Summit Meeting in Shanghai *inter alia* states that the "the Heads of State (of SCO member countries) also entrusted the Council of National Coordinators to make recommendations on the procedure of SCO membership enlargement".

(c) India was represented at the sixth SCO Summit at Shanghai by Shri Murli Deora, Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas. Shri Deora was

accompanied by senior officials of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas and the Ministry of External Affairs.

(d) Ten documents were issued at the Shanghai summit including a Declaration and a Joint Communique. With reference to the issues related to security and counter-terrorism, the Declaration *inter alia* states that SCO Member States would "not allow their territories to be used to undermine the sovereignty, security or territorial integrity of other member states, and they prohibit activities by organizations or gangs in their territories that are detrimental to the interests of other member states". With regard to energy, the Declaration welcomed "participation by relevant partners in specific projects in priority areas like energy". The Summit approved a cooperation programme of SCO members to combat terrorism, separatism and extremism.

Simplification of certificate authentication for going abroad

2141. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that aspirants intending to go abroad have to run from pillar to post for getting the authentication of certificates done from many authorities; and

(b) whether Government would simplify the procedure and decentralize this so that the aspirants could get this done in their State capitals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) The present system of authentication of certificates involves minimum steps required to ensure that genuine certificates are authenticated as expeditiously as possible. It is also intended to prevent forged/fake certificates from being authenticated; and

(b) It has been the constant endeavour of the Government to simplify the procedure related to the authentication of certificates. Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Goa have been authorized to authenticate educational documents.